

George A. Singleton
5828 Race Street
Philadelphia -39., Pa.

Amante Sheet A 16

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

DEACONESS
MANUAL

OF THE

AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BY

ABRAHAM GRANT



1902

CONTENTS

	Pages.
Great Female Characters of the Bible.....	6-13
Female Characters of Our Own.....	14-22
Ceremony of Consecration.....	23-25
Duties of Deaconesses.....	26
Deaconess Home	27
Form of Deaconess Certificate.....	27
Special Instructions	28

PREFACE.

As we grow to take more serious views of life, its consequent obligations and responsibilities, "in this loud, stunning tide of human care and crime," facing its stern and logical realities, we are impressed with a lively sense of the brief period of our lives in "the vineyard of the Master," in which to labor.

It is urgent upon us, not only to be "redeeming the time" (Eph. 5:16)—that is to say, using the privileges granted and accorded in the Church, and taking every advantage of each opportunity, in engaging and turning the energies of all with whom we may have to do in furthering the great cause we represent.

As a Methodist, serving in the altars of the A. M. E. Church Communion, we are moved to endeavor in turning the affection and devotion of our women to more concentrated effort and operation. We have the material and the field is not only large, but awaiting their tender and gentle ministrations as Deaconesses. This is our apology for offering and sending forth this little book.

We have culled from Holy Writ some of its historic names of females of blessed memory as proper standards of virtue and example, to which we invite prayerful study and emulation; also, only a precious few from the multitude of Christian heroines who have

loftily towered in worth and excellence among our own people.

The last chapter of our little messenger is intended as an ample form in consecrating Deaconesses, for which we are mainly indebted to Bishop B. F. Lee, D. D. Its obligation once taken should never, under any pretense, be shifted or laid aside; the body, mind and life should forever be with the Lord in doing His will and pleasure.

Praying that the Great Head of the Church may bless the work and Order of Deaconesses, I am yours in Christian bonds,

A. GRANT.

CERTIFICATE.

To the Ministers and Members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Greeting:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the Bishops' Council, at its session June 19, 1901, appointed a committee to prepare a Chapter on the Deaconesses of the Church. At its session June 20, 1902, Wilberforce University, Bishop Abraham Grant, Chairman of the Committee, reported the Chapter as prepared by himself and endorsed by his committee. It was read by the Secretary, and on motion of Bishop M. B. Salter it was unanimously adopted by the Council and ordered printed as a Chapter to govern the Deaconesses in the A. M. E. Church.

Bishop M. B. Salter also moved that the Deaconess Home, Roanoke, Va., purchased by Bishop B. F. Lee and others, be recognized as a Connectional Institution and shall receive such support as the Church is able to give it.

[SEAL.]

BENJAMIN W. ARNETT,

Secretary of the Bishops' Council, A. M. E. Church.

WILBERFORCE, O., June 28, 1902.

Great Female Characters of the Bible

Woman is pre-eminently the helper of man—his second self. Not only can she be styled “the mother of all living” (Gen. 3:20), but the mother of all social, educational and religious efforts of man. In everything which pertains to the supreme and most desired pursuits of man, for happiness; woman is “an helpmeet for him” (Gen. 2:18). It is not strange, therefore, that she figures and is identified with every purpose and work of man.

Among the very many women named in the Bible, and who shine out as stars of undying lustre of the first magnitude, we have selected five of different, yet indispensable, characters as becoming models for the women of the Church of to-day; especially those who would engage to serve under the shadow of her holy altars:

THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH.

[1 Kings 17:9-24.]

A WOMAN OF UNPARALLELED FAITH.

Among the hosts of women of her generation she was first, and afterward became a historic figure, recorded in the jealously guarded and treasured archives of the Jewish Church religious literature, and,

after the flight of many centuries, commended by the Christ, the Son of God.

She was a widow, a Canaanite, living in the heathen city of Zarephath (Luke 4:26). She had one child, a little boy. The hard and unrelenting drouth of three years had brought on a grievous famine, and she was on the verge of starvation. She, in some unaccountable way, knew God, though all about her was idolatry in its worst forms. She not only knew and trusted in God, but had faith in His minister, the prophet Elijah.

There were many honorable, great and reputable women in Israel, many of them princesses and well-known in the sphere of the Temple work and influence, but God chose to use this obscure, poverty-stricken widow of another race to further His cause on earth.

Her faith was tested. In the bitterness of poverty, the utmost extremity of her need, God sends the strong and rugged prophet to her to be fed. His demand is, "Make me thereof a little cake first and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son" (I Kings 17:13). She had only enough to make the "little cake," and now to deny herself and starving baby for the strong minister was indeed a sacrifice enough to stagger the strongest faith. Her faith was well founded. She believed God, and "she went and did according to the saying of Elijah."

We would have you to note that she was nothing in herself; she had nothing. She loved the cause Elijah represented. She took his advice to "Fear not." She was humble. "The Lord thy God liveth." She did not say "our" or "my" God, though she trusted Him. (Verse 24.)

THE SHUNAMITE PRINCESS.

[II Kings 4:8.]

THE HOSPITABLE WOMAN.

God is no respecter of persons. In His service are beggars and princesses, noble and ignoble. We have a brilliant example in "the Shunamite woman," great and wealthy, a lover of good men and humbly reverential to God's cause in her unselfish hospitality.

She was one of that class of women who are desirous of aiding and contributing to the comfort of the ministry in keeping an open door. One day, looking out upon the road, she saw the form of the prophet Elisha, footsore, dusty and travel-stained. Perhaps it was the hot, sultry midday, or nearing sunset, "and she constrained him to eat bread"—that is, she insisted upon him accepting her hospitality. So generous and considerate was her kindness that "as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread."

The good appreciates the good. Being deeply impressed with the sincere and godly manner of the prophet, she enlisted the sympathy and co-operation of her husband to further provide for the entertainment of the "holy man of God" in going to the additional expense of making special room for him "on the wall" and furnishing the same.

The room was placed so as to overlook the road, town, etc., and in a place retired from annoyance, thus showing studious care, for which the prophet Elisha felt obligated and offered compensation, which she modestly and firmly declined. There are several

prominent points to which we would call attention as a model of hospitality:

(a) Being "a great woman" did not affect her spirit of true charity, because the minister was rugged in appearance and commonly clothed.

(b) She revered holy men and believed it her duty to support them.

(c) She was unselfish, expecting neither reward nor honorable mention.

(d) She not only had the confidence of her husband, but could enlist his sympathy in entertaining good men.

And lastly, that any kindness done to God's cause, in any way, is sure to bring its blessing, and those who labor in the service of God will be provided for.

THE PROPHETESS ANNA.

[Luke 2:36-38.]

A CONSECRATED WOMAN.

Luke is the only writer who has made mention of this famous female character, though well known and a familiar figure in the Temple in Jerusalem. The lines of her great character will demand attention and regard in any age and among any people.

As a young girl she was virtuous "and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity." After the death of her husband she devoted her life to God and His Church, giving her talents, service, "and departed not from the Temple." She was ever there, until her long and useful life of "about eighty-four years" ended in her final departure from this

world. What a glorious and undying record of religious faithfulness! The secret of her life is given:

(a) She was a strong and earnest lover of the Church.

(b) She engaged in the service of the Lord and gained a reputation for such. She is thus monumented.

(c) In order to overcome the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil and win the crown of her life, she gave herself to "fastings and prayers night and day."

(d) Her prophetic gift was from her devotion to God and His cause, hence she was filled with His Spirit, who "revealed things to come."

(e) Lastly, she believed in the redemption of her people and thus was able to speak to and encourage others. God does not want borrowed lives.

THE DISCIPLE TABITHA.

[Acts 9:36-42.]

A CHURCH WORKER.

We live in good works and deeds, not in racial ties or family relationship. "A certain disciple" is all the genealogy given of this great worker and organizer, whose name signifies "beauty." All that we can know is that she was well known and a prominent woman, and whose fame as such had extended beyond the limits of her country. She appears to have been the leader of a band of widows who engaged in an active and practical Christianity. There are four features of this much beloved and estimable woman which speak for themselves, conveying deep and sol-

emn truths to those who would engage in the service of the Master:

(a) She was both a learner and follower of the apostles' doctrine.

(b) She was a worker, not only leading and engaging others in good work, but worked with her own hands, though she appears to have been wealthy, or, even rich. Her companions could exhibit with pride the garments made by her willing hands.

(c) She gave freely herself and did not depend upon soliciting and using only that contributed by others, for "she was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did."

(d) She held an indispensable position in the Church, for whom the Church could with all sincerity and earnestness pray.

THE ACCOMPLISHED PRISCILLA.

[Acts 18:26.]

CHURCH INSPIRER AND HELPER.

The ministrations and service of the laity is as varied and necessary as that of the ministry itself. It is remarkable how many-sided is the work of the Church; something—some particular thing—for each and every one to do.

We have but a few brief words in the Scriptures concerning the identity of this prominent and remarkable woman, but those few sentences are full of meaning and speak volumes of worth and excellence.

We note here a few of her virtues:

(a) She was well versed in Christian doctrine,

and we may justly conclude that her intelligence was directed in such a way as to be supremely helpful in the enlightenment of those about her.

(b) She was a constant attendant in the synagogue and an attentive listener to the ministry of the disciples, hence could not fail to hear Apollos, but not carried away with his eloquence.

(c) She was zealous both for the truth and ability enlisted in it, for after hearing the eloquent Apollos, though himself "mighty in the Scriptures," with her husband took him home with them "and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." This required both tact and grace.

(d) She had a church in her house and was a faithful helper of the apostles. Paul makes special mention of her and her house.

SUMMARY.

Those who would engage in the active work of the Lord must have an undoubted faith and not be discouraged because of adverse conditions. They should not consider that they must be possessed of great things before they can begin service. The starving widow of Zarephath little thought that God would use her to so great purpose, while she was in herself so little.

Hospitality is just as necessary to-day as it ever was, and no one can hope for success in Christian work without it. Women, if married, should so know how to demean themselves as not to prejudice the work in the minds of their husbands. A woman who

has not the confidence of her husband can do but little good in church work and above all in the entertainment of ministers.

Consecration of heart, soul and mind is requisite for great and enlarged service. God wants clean vessels; the whole heart or none. Self-life must be displaced and die, if you would "be filled with the Spirit."

The Church must have its practical work to the bodies and minds of men as well as their souls. Many women divorce their work of benevolence from the Church and give it to the world in the form of societies, etc. The Church needs the Tabithas rather than the society ladies of the day.

Pastors and others can be largely helped in their ministerial work by the talented and educated women, in honest criticism and united effort in the class-room, Sunday-school and revival service.

FEMALE CHARACTERS OF OUR OWN.

PHYLLIS WHEATLEY.

Phyllis Wheatley, the first negro poetess, was born in Africa and brought to this country in 1761, then a small child. At that time slavery was common to all the colonies, and she was sold as a slave in Boston. She was bought by a Mrs. Wheatley, who was very kind to her and seems to have loved her very much.

Phyllis learned readily and soon became noted for her achievements. She learned Latin, and some of the stories she translated from that language were printed in English magazines. She wrote and published many poems, one of which was addressed to General George Washington.

At 21 years of age she was emancipated and went to Europe, where she was well received and made many friends. She seemed to make herself beloved wherever she went.

She was recalled to America by the serious illness of Mrs. Wheatley, who died soon after her arrival. From that time the life of Phyllis was shadowed by sorrow, but her character only becomes more lovable as it is crowned with adversity and girdled about with troubles.

Phyllis married a Mr. Peters, but the marriage was not happy, for he was very unkind to her. This

harsh treatment was too much for her sensitive nature to bear. Like a frail flower when struck by the unkindly breeze of winter, she faded and died at the early age of 31 years.

In her time she was well and favorably known as a woman of cultivated mind and high principles, and we read with much pleasure the few poems left us. The style is agreeable, the themes pure and lofty. They seem to be the spontaneous utterances of a heart full of love for God and mankind.

We cannot but regret that we have no fuller memorials of this talented woman, but these poems, few though they may be, are valuable to us as a record of what a woman of an oppressed race could do under unfavorable circumstances. Nothing shows her capacity more than this ability to surmount the difficulties by which she was surrounded.

Genius is not a heritage of any color or rank, but a mind finely gifted, with keen insight and susceptible to noble thoughts has within itself the sparks of that glowing fire. Judging from her poems, she possessed that rare gift and united with it a sense to discern and a heart to love beauty and goodness wherever seen.

Her moral character was in harmony with her poetry, and her poetry was inspired and elevated by her moral purity. Every part of her life which is known is a precious and splendid portion of our race history. We honor her in our hearts and would pay every possible tribute to her memory.

We rejoice to see that our people are beginning to recognize her genius, but she has not yet reaped her full reward of appreciation. The young people of

the Metropolitan A. M. E. Sunday-school of Washington, D. C., have organized themselves into a literary club, to which, as a slight token of the high esteem they have for our poetess, they have given the name, "Phyllis Wheatley." Let us hope others will follow in their footsteps.

The life of such a woman should be an inspiration to the women of her race. We can point with pride to her as an example for study and emulation.

MRS. AMANDA SMITH.

Amanda Smith is a most unique character. In all the Christian world she holds a place peculiarly her own—a position hewn out for her because she believed God. Her whole life is a living, tangible testimony of God's power to save and grace to provide. These two, power and grace, have been made so manifest unto her that at one time at the very word *power* she fell prostrate to the ground, and now, constantly, there is in her heart and on her lips the expression: "In some way or other, the Lord will provide."

She was born to the condition of a slave January 23, 1837, at Long Green, Md., of Samuel and Mariam Berry. But her father bought her freedom when she was a child. While she had comparatively no advantages for an education, yet she had the boon of being the child of godly parents, who in her early childhood exerted a wholesome spiritual and moral influence over her. Her grandmother, her father and mother were devout Christians. When a small girl she was happily converted in the Baptist Church, Columbia, Pa. She continued in this happy state

until by chance one day she found some old infidel literature, which somehow took possession of her. But God in a very peculiar way completely delivered her. One day she got into conversation with her aunt on religious subjects, and she began to use her infidel arguments which she had gotten from that kind of literature. Her aunty was astonished, but, being a woman of good sense, severely rebuked her. She didn't argue with her, but, as one having authority, she rebuked that satanic spirit, and it left her entirely.

From her conversion on up until God took her into the evangelistic work solely, she worked very hard at manual labor, cooking, washing, ironing, etc. But she always found some time to do at least a little work for perishing men and women and for the glory of Jesus. She held prayer meetings, distributed tracts, visited the sick, dying and distressed. She did the work of a Deaconess, although she had not been appointed nor consecrated by earthly hands.

But it is to her credit that the first colored Deaconess to ever take a regular course of training, graduate and receive a certificate to the same was by her efforts. The young woman who did this was Miss Sarah Slater, who is now Mrs. Stewart. She was at that time a member of Bethel Church, under Dr. R. C. Ransom. Mrs. Amanda Smith interceded for her and got her into the M. E. Deaconess Home in Chicago.

Sister Smith has worked throughout America, in India, England and Africa, and everywhere her labors have been attended with great success and additions to the Kingdom of God.

When in England, God asked her: "Why not start an Industrial Home for Colored Children?" This rang in her ears continually. She earnestly sought God to know whether it was His will that she should start an orphan home. God said to her, "Is there a need for such a home?" She said, "Yes." Then the Lord said, "What is your duty to a need?" She said, "I see, I see."

The Lord opened up the way, and now she has a beautiful two-story brick building with considerable ground for her orphan home. She has in the home twenty-five children, who are being clothed, schooled and fed. She also publishes a monthly paper, The Helper, which has about 5,000 subscribers, through which medium many souls are kept in contact with her rich Christian experience.

Without education, without noble ancestors, without wealth she has worked well. Surely the work of God is done, "not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

MRS. MARY A. CAMPBELL.

On January 10, 1818, Mary Ann Akins, daughter of George and Eliza Akins, was born in the city of Philadelphia, Pa. The limits of the city at this time extended from Callowhill street to Christian street, and from Front street to Eleventh street, forming a square of about twelve blocks. The means of transportation were meager, and colored people were barred from these privileges, as well as many other things. It is needless to compare the things just hinted at with the present extent of the city and the privileges enjoyed, since the comparison readily sug-

gests itself to those acquainted with American progress.

The subject of this sketch received a common school education in one of the public schools of the city, besides attending for a short time a school conducted by the Society of Friends.

In the year 1836 Mary Akins was married to Joseph Shire, to whom were born four children. One, Joseph J. still lives in Philadelphia.

In 1832 she joined "Mother" Bethel, the year after Bishop Allen died, and of him she has vivid recollections.

In 1849 her husband died, and she remained a widow until 1855, when, on June 14th of that year, she was wedded to Rev. Jabez Pitt Campbell, then pastor of Union Church, located on what was called Coates street. They had one son born to them. In 1864 Rev. J. P. Campbell was elected to the Bishopric of the A. M. E. Church, which position he held with honor and credit until his death in 1891.

In 1873 a church was started on West Lombard street, an outgrowth of "Mother" Bethel. Among its original members was Mary A. Campbell, and she is still a devoted member.

The Women's Parent Mite Missionary Society was organized in 1874 to assist the Missionary Department. The above named was one of the organizers, and for a short time held the position of President. In 1878 or '79 she was elected to the position of Treasurer, and has continued as such until the present time.

It is interesting to note that during her lifetime she has always resided in Philadelphia, except two

years spent in Trenton, N. J., when Bishop Campbell, then an elder, was pastor of the church there.

When the "Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons" was founded in 1864 she was one of those elected to the Board of Managers, and continues in active service on this board. This "Home" is without a doubt the best appointed and conducted institution of its kind for people of color in this country, and possibly in the world.

When the "Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital and Training School" was organized in 1895 the name of Mary A. Campbell was found among the charter members, and she is still upon the Board of Managers of the institution.

Although considerably over three-score and ten years, she is a woman of much vitality, being able to continue many of the duties performed in younger days. Her contributions to charity, education and the like attest her generosity and sympathy for mankind in general and her own people in particular.

MRS. FANNY JACKSON COPPIN.

This celebrated educator and race woman was born in the District of Columbia about the year 1837. When but a child she was left an orphan in the world. Her aunt, Mrs. Sarah Clark, took her to raise. But in those days educational opportunities were very limited in Washington. In 1853 she was taken to New Bedford, Mass., by a kind friend, Mrs. Orr, but it was in the home of Mayor Caldwell at Newport, R. I., that Mrs. Coppin received the greatest encouragement to develop the splendid mind with which God had endowed her. Having made diligent

and full preparation in the schools of Newport, she was sent to complete her education at Oberlin College, that seat of learning which has given to the race so many finished scholars. Being quite poor, she was compelled to do a great deal of work between school hours, but be it said that whether at manual work or at her studies, she exhibited great industry and ability. In a short time she had out-ranked all those of her class and was spoken of by the faculty as evidently a young woman of great promise. Finishing her college course with honor to herself and great satisfaction to the friends by whose assistance she had been able to advance, she was called to the position of teacher in the Institute for Colored Youth at Philadelphia, Pa. Her services cannot be overestimated in connection with this institution and the city of Philadelphia. For thirty-seven years she has labored incessantly for the advancement of the young men and women of the race. About twenty years ago, due to her efforts, the industrial feature was added to the school. An adjoining lot was purchased, a substantial building erected and the teaching of trades begun. At present about ten trades are being taught. Mrs. Coppin has all her life been deeply interested in Church work. As the wife of Bishop L. J. Coppin she has labored with him in all his charges. In the Women's Mite Society she has been of great assistance. Either as a simple floor member or officer she has thrown her usual energy and ability into the work.

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH TANNER.

Mrs. Tanner was born May 18, 1840, and raised in Pittsburg, Pa. She attended the public schools of the

city and later became a student at Avery College. Owing to the death of her father, she was compelled to leave college before finishing the course. However, as an index of her worth and attainments, she was made a teacher in the day schools and later taught at Avery College. She was married August 19, 1858, and B. T. Tanner, who was then a barber, soon entered the ministry and was afterward made a Bishop. During all the trials incident to early struggles in the itinerancy she was distinguished for her great patience and devotion to her husband and her family. Being the mother of five girls and two boys, these trials, on a small charge, were not a few. Her life has not been spent as what might be called a "public woman," but in her community and church she has for long years exerted a healthful and powerful influence. Nearly all of her life has been spent in Philadelphia. This city knows best of her usefulness. She is one of the charter members of the Parent Mite Missionary Society and also a charter member of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital of Philadelphia. The great Napoleon was once asked, "What does France most need?" He replied, "Mothers." This is the need of every nation and race. Mrs. Tanner has met that need. She has been an indulgent, loving, wise and Christian mother. Until their latest day her children will rise up and call her blessed.

For a long number of years she was the President of the Woman's Mite Missionary Society, which prospered under her administration. Her life work is highly appreciated by those who have come in contact with her and enjoyed her association,

CEREMONY OF CONSECRATION.

THE DEACONESSES.

(This office was created by the General Conference in 1900.)

QUALIFICATIONS: A woman, to be admitted to the office of Deaconess, should not be younger than eighteen years nor older than thirty-five, unmarried, or, a widow, possessed of good reputation, good English education, a full membership of at least two years in the A. M. E. Church, and general adaptation for the work.

HOW CONSTITUTED.

A woman feeling herself called to the office of Deaconess may state the same to her pastor. If the pastor regards her as a suitable person for Deaconess, he shall present her name to the Official Board. If the Official Board regard her as worthy, it shall elect her Deaconess and select a committee of three Stewardesses to arrange for her consecration. On a day appointed by the Bishop, for consecration of Deaconesses, all persons to be consecrated shall appear in full Deaconess garb. The Bishop, or some person appointed by him, shall deliver an address or sermon, setting forth the importance, responsibilities and duties of the Deaconess.

The committee of Stewardesses shall conduct the candidates to the pastor, who shall present them to the Bishop.

CEREMONY.

Pastor: "Reverend Father in God, I present these holy women to be consecrated Deaconesses."

The Bishop: "Take heed that these women whom you present be proper persons to perform the work of a Deaconess, and that they be of sober mind, modest in all their ways and possessed of large charity."

Pastor: "They have been examined and are believed to be well qualified to enter upon the sacred duties of Deaconess."

The Bishop: "It becometh the Deaconess that she shall be pious, chaste, temperate in all things, modest, humble, industrious and devout, as she is to serve the Church of God to His praise and glory. Throughout the history of the Church God has been pleased to call and qualify certain women for the gentler and holy service of ministering to the Church and the ministry. Such women were Deborah, Mary the holy mother, Eunice, Lois, Priscilla, Lyddia and Phoebe. And in the latter days He has been pleased to own and bless the labors of Sister Sarah Gorham and many others. May the Lord bless and acknowledge these persons according as He has blessed the ministrations of all holy women. May they withdraw themselves from all worldly cares and vocations and give themselves up entirely to ministrations to the Church and to suffering humanity."

Then shall the Bishop inquire of the candidates as follows:

"Have you duly considered the sacredness, the ex-

actions and responsibilities of this office which you have come to enter?"

Answer: "I have considered them all.

Bishop: "Are you determined to observe all the rules for a Deaconess, give yourself up to such life and duties as these rules require, and keep yourself unspotted from the world, all its vanities and frivolities?"

Answer: "I am so determined."

Bishop: "Will you be governed by the discipline of the A. M. E. Church and subject to the direction given in the discharge of the duties of your office?"

Answer: "I will be so governed."

Then shall the persons to be consecrated kneel. The Bishop, taking each candidate by the hand, shall say to her:

Bishop: "Be thou consecrated to the office and work of a Deaconess in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

DUTIES OF THE DEACONESSSES.

The Deaconesses shall be subject to the general direction of pastors. They shall conduct meetings when and where deemed advisable, attend public worship regularly, visit the sick and suffering, the fatherless and widow in their distress, and keep themselves unspotted from the world. They shall do all in their power to comfort and serve those suffering in asylums, hospitals and prisons; to raise those who are fallen and care for those who are neglected. They shall give special attention to neglected children and unfortunate homes. They may be directed to cooperate with the Church in all work of charity and humanity.

DEACONESS BOARD.

In small charges the Deaconess Board shall include three members; in larger charges five, seven or nine, and not more than twelve, one of whom shall be Vice-President, the pastor being, by virtue of his position, President.

The Board should hold regular business meetings once a month, and may be called to special meetings by President or Vice-President.

The Board shall render a report of its work and wants to the Quarterly Conference regularly and be subject to it.

The pastor may suspend a Deaconess for impropriety, inharmony or immorality. The final action shall be with the Quarterly Conference.

DRESS.

The Deaconesses shall dress uniformly in blue grey, trimmed in white.

DEACONESS HOME.

Excepting those persons previously consecrated on the introduction of the office, all Deaconesses shall be required to take at least one year's training in the Roanoke Deaconess Home and Girl's Training School at Roanoke, Va., or some similar training school.

The Deaconess Homes shall be established by the Council of Bishops when and where deemed necessary.

These Homes shall be under wise, careful and Christian discipline. The supervision of each Home shall be in the hands of a committee, of five ministers of the Annual Conference, within whose territory it is located. This committee shall be required to report annually to the Annual Conference.

CERTIFICATE.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that
 a member in good standing in
 A. M. E. Church, has this day been consecrated to the
 office of Deaconess in the African Methodist Epis-
 copal Church.

Done this day of
 in the year 190...

.....
 Bishop.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.

1. **THE SICK ROOM.** You are expected to visit the sick, those who are distressed and often crazed with pains, aches, and delirious with hot, scorching fevers. They may often appear cross and peevish; often in discouragement and despair; in their desperate struggles with disease and losing hope, may look with disfavor upon your ministration as a worker of the Church. You are expected to fortify and harden yourself against rebuke and peevishness; put your feelings aside and assume a cheerful manner and voice; mournful looks and tones are not good antidotes of sicknesses. Do not be too inquisitive and volunteer superfluous advice in recommending various drugs, roots, herbs and patent medicines. Be gentle in touch and step; avoid loud talking and needless standing over the sick, or, moving about. Use tact in presenting the claims of the Bible; remember that God speaks to men in "a still, small voice;" too much talk may nauseate and cause the patient to wish you gone. Do not go to gather up "dying testimony," but be more concerned to get living testimony; oftentimes, through effect of strong medicines and fever, the sick may give utterance to peculiar and irreligious words and expressions, to which you are to pay no heed. Protect the sufferer as much as possible, in both mind and body. The

undertaker will bring a coffin when the time comes, so let your mission be to bring good tidings. Acquaint your pastor of all cases needing his attention. He can do his work much better than you. And do not argue about religion with the pastor as to what you do, or, do not believe in the sick room; be quiet and let him have the "right of way." Arrange the disordered room and the bedclothes; if the bedding require it, try and effect a change. Let pity prompt every service of yours.

2. THE BED-CHAMBER OF THE DYING. You are to stand by the bedside where a soul is losing its moorings to its fallen tabernacle, and breaking every human tie, and fast losing consciousness of its surroundings. The spot is sacred and the occasion one of the deepest solemnity and gravity. Why ply the departing soul with numerous and useless questions, when, perhaps, it may be communing with its Maker or gathering strength for the outward sweep into the Eternal Beyond? Stand near, in attentive silence, and wait to hear the call, the expressed want, the muttered prayer and join it; give it time; do not get excited; be the example of dignity and Christian faith for the agonized husband, father, wife, mother, brother or sister, whose heart, in its sorrow, seems ready to burst in agonized grief; try and calm that storm and encourage the wounded heart. When death has come do what you can in preparing the body at once for its burial. Avoid the superstition of covering up the pictures and looking-glasses with cloths. Close the eyes and tie a cloth about the face to close the mouth. In regard to funeral arrangements, consult with the family about seeing the pas-

tor, so as to avoid coming into conflict with any previous appointment he may have made, thus causing embarrassment.

3. THE UNFORTUNATE. Men and women are losing their property by fire and water and wind; their money by speculation and otherwise; their pride suffers; they are sensitive and downhearted. Some are crippled in limb, blind, deaf, dumb, simple and idiotic, deformed, and they are often mocked and made sport of. Only by kindness and loving words can they be reached and brought within the house of God. Or, they may be found isolated in lonely places; these are indeed the ones of "the highways and hedges" that the Christian worker is to find, in the lanes and alleys; they are ekeing out a sad existence, feeling keenly the humiliation of the world. Will you not be a friend to them? This is the class the Master largely sought out—the "weary and heavy laden."

Over yonder, in an almost desolate place, is the "poor-house," and within its cheerless confines are those who once were light, happy and gay, but they are now "upon the cold charity of the world." They need your visitation and godly communion. In the hospitals, lying upon their cots suffering, are many who have neither "kith nor kin" to visit them; some will never again walk forth in life. The voice of God calls and says, "Comfort ye my people; comfort ye my people!" The wounded Samaritan is there, the prodigal son and many wandering daughters, who would be happy if they knew of Christ. Why not take a companion in there and speak of Jesus and offer a short prayer. The jails and prisons

await your coming. These are among the unfortunate; they see no star of hope, but you can point them to "The Bright and Morning Star." You can carry little tracts and Scripture truths. Some you may get pardoned, and thus save a valuable life by a judicious intercession. Go to those who hear naught but the iron bolts moving, and rattling of prison chains, with armed and stern guards about them, while in their narrow cells. They need you.

4. THE HUNGRY AND NAKED. This class you must, in the main, look up. Some are too old to work and are left to starve in desolate places; others, on account of sickness, are unable to work; others, again, in the big cities, are out of work and money; they cannot get any food for themselves and little ones; they should be reported to the Church or any other institution which should feed the hungry poor.

Then there are the little half-clothed and shoeless children who never see inside of a church or Sunday-school, who could be clothed by garments made by you; clothes and cast-off shoes could be solicited and given them. Such attention would win many. We must learn to minister to bodies in order to reach souls. Fine churches, organs, choirs, eloquence and such like are good when men are fed and clothed, but these are forgotten when they are hungry and naked, with suffering children around their knees crying for bread.

5. HOMELESS PERSONS. This refers principally to females, who are stranded in the city; who are without work, and often in despair go to the bad; little boys and girls deserted by faithless parents or guardians, and often still in the hands of careless parents

and guardians. Homes should be sought and places of work. If we have a Deaconess Home, work in sewing and such like could be given them until a place could be found. Many such females can be met at the depots from off the trains and at steamboat landings. Without money, they know not where to go. The saloons and other places have their doors standing invitingly open, while the church is closed. We must set before this class "an open door."

6. FALLEN WOMEN. They are human. Many of them have said to themselves, "No one cares for my soul," and so they plunge deeper into disgrace; others there are who long to get away from their awful and horrid surroundings, but have no one to encourage them to make an effort. They cannot be reached at the "end of a long pole;" personal contact is the essential. Let the Deaconesses go in company to these homes of sin, in the name of the Lord, and go as a sister. Talk to them and urge them to begin life over again. Do not stop because fruits are not immediate. Sometimes they may be found upon the streets, wandering about. They have hearts that can be touched, "chords that will vibrate once more." Why should we not speak to the woman that is "a harlot?" Are we purer than the Master? There is no class of individuals who are regarded with more contempt and shunned. Should they wish to do so, society would willingly excuse a neglect of visiting this class of people by pious women; but duty calls to go to them and carry a message of peace and pardon.



George A. Singleton
5828 Race Street
Philadelphia 39_{st} Pa.

